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Original Poetry.

We heartily thank our friend for this chaste and beautiful poem, which will not fail to be admired:

For The Independent.

FLOWER OF THE SOUTHLAND.

BY W. H. VENABLE.

Flower of the Southland,
Seraphically bright!
Fragile as a vision
Of the silent night:
With a lover's rapture,
Let me sing to thee
Softly as the breeze sings
To the sleeping sea.

Flower of the Southland,
Ever may'st thou bloom
In the golden sunshine,
Never in the gloom:
Tranquil be thy day-thoughts,
Blessed be thy dreams
As an angel's musings
By celestial streams!

Flower of the Southland!
May thy life's decline
Fade into the glory
Of the light divine,
As the star of morning
Vanisheth away
In the white refulgence
Of the perfect day.

Selected Sketch.

AUNT MIRIAM'S ADVENTURE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

Aunt Miriam and Uncle Peter and James Arnett were sitting together in the room, the lady busy with her knitting.

"So you've really made up your mind to get married, James—do stop teasing that kitten!" said the old lady, with a constrained voice.

"Yes, Aunt Miriam; it isn't good for man to be alone, you know."

There was a silence again. James Arnett wound and unwound his yarn very unnecessarily; Uncle Peter eyed his seed-peas thoughtfully, and Mrs. Fenner knit energetically on, with pursed-up lips and a scarcely perceptible shrug of the shoulders.

"Aunt Miriam, I wish you could see Millicent," said the young man, at length.

"I can't say I have any desire to see your city young ladies, James," said Aunt Miriam, coldly; "they'er too fine spun for an old woman like me. White hands and piano playin' may be very grand—I dare say it is—but it don't suit *my* taste."

"But Aunty, I am sure you would like her. Come, now, do be reasonable, and go over to Squire Brownell's with me to night; she is spending a week at her grandfather's, and she would be so much gratified to see you!"

"Thank you, I aint curious on the subject," responded Aunt Miriam, primly. "Only I heered that Mis' Brownell had a bad stroke of the rheumatiz, and I don't see how she gets along to wait on her new-fangled granddarter!"

"I can't understand why you are so prejudiced against poor Millicent, Aunt Miriam," said the young man, uneasily. "I won't disguise from you that it makes me very unhappy to think of marrying without the approval of one who has been a mother to me, and yet—"

"And yet you're determined to go your own gate; that's the plain English of it, James;" said Aunt Miriam.—"Well, I s'pose you can do without my consent, you'll never get it, anyhow!" And she poked the fire vigorously as the old clock began to strike.

"Seven o'clock!" ejaculated James, starting up, "and I promised to be at the post-office by this time. There's to be a meeting about the minister's donation party, you know, Uncle Peter! Bless me, I didn't imagine how late it was!"

And with a gay parting nod to his aunt, he disappeared.

"There he goes—as good a boy as ever lived," said Uncle Peter; "but I guess afore the evenin' comes to an end, he'll contrive to get round to Squire Brownell's. Miriam, you may as well say yes to that affair at once; he's determined to marry the gal, rings and city fashions and all."

"I wish we'd never sent him to college in New York," sighed Mrs. Fenner, "then he would not have come across this city sweetheart."

"Then he'd ha' come across somebody else; so it's as broads as it is long," remarked Peter, philosophically.

"Yes, but it might have been a smart, stirring gal, who knew how to keep house; not a useless toy, good for nothin' but to hang gay clothes on. I tell you, Peter, I can't approve of it no how."

Uncle Peter whistled "Hark, from the Tombs a doleful sound," and returned once more to the contemplation of his melon seeds and corn kernels.

Nine o'clock; the fire covered with a mound of brown ashes; the cricket chirping drowsily, and Uncle Peter snoring melodiously from an inner room; still Mrs. Fenner sat there mechanically plying her knitting needles, yet unconscious that the kitten was frisking about, and hopelessly entangling her precious ball of homspun yarn—deaf and dumb and blind to everything but her own thoughts.

"I wonder," she began, and then stopped. "After all," she mentally resumed the next minute, "there can't be any harm in it, if I just slip on my hood and shawl and go through the orchard path, across to Squire Browell's. Not that I'd go in—not a bit of it; but I'd merely take a peep in at the keepin'-room window as I went past. I *would* like to see what sort of a face it is that bewitched James so completely; but *he* must never be any the wiser for it!"

She pondered a second or two longer, then rose hurriedly, extinguished the little candle that stood in a shining brass candlestick on the mantle, listened a moment to the unbroken monotony of Uncle Peter's snores, and muffling a shawl around her head, withdrew the bolt of the kitchen door, and crept out into the starless gloom of the November night!

It was but a short distance, under the leafless branches of the gnarled old apple-trees and into the turnpike road. Aunt Miriam felt a little conscience-stricken as she lifted the wicket of Squire Brownell's gate and stole noiselessly up the chrysanthemum bordered walk; she could'nt help wondering what Elder Olive would say if he were to become aware that she, the sagest old lady in the congregation, were prowling about here like a thief in the night!

"It's all for James's sake," said the venerable dame, under her breath, as she pushed aside the sweetbrier, that hung over the panes, and peeped slyly into the window.

Mrs. Brownell sat in a big arm chair by the fire, her feet swathed in flannel; the squire was smoking his pipe over a three-days' old newspaper; and before a pine table, at the other end of the room, stood a rosy-cheeked girl, of perhaps seventeen, the sleeves of her crimson merino dress rolled up above a pair of exquisitely dimpled elbows, and her hands buried in a wooden tray of flour—engaged, in fact, in the operation which housekeepers call "setting a sponge." So much at home did she seem in the culinary art, that Aunt Miriam said to herself, very decidedly, "*This* can't be the city visitor; I wonder where she is?" when her doubts were dispelled by Mrs. Brownell's voice:

"Millicent, I wish you would write out the receipt for that cake you made for tea—I don't see where you learned to be so handy about the house?"

"Why, grandmumma!" said the young lady gaily, "you seem to forget that my mother was educated under your eye. She does not believe that French and music are everything a girl needs to learn. Now do put those stockings down—I'll see that they are duly mended, by-and-by."

Aunt Miriam turned away from the window more bewildered than ever, but with a very satisfied feeling stirring under the heap of prejudices that had filled her kind old heart. If this were the much-talked-of Millicent, things might not be so bad after all. And Milly worked away at her sponge, the merry smiles dimpling over her face, like sunshine on a bed of roses, utterly unconscious of the audience of "*one*," who was now contemplating a retreat.

But the adventures of the night were not yet at a close. As Aunt Miriam groped her way toward the path, lamenting the pitchy darkness of the night, and the crackling of the crisp leaves as her not very elastic feet shuffled through them, every pulse in her frame came to a sudden pause of terror, as a pair of muscular arms were thrown around her, and a moustache came in contact with her cheek! Such a kiss—Aunt Miriam couldn't remember its like since the days when Peter Fenner courted the beauty of the village. In vain she struggled breathlessly to escape—whoever the individual might be, he didn't do things by halves, and evidently had no disposition to relinquish his prize.

"My darling little Milly! how did you know I was coming to-night?"

Then came another kiss, before Aunt Miriam could exclaim, in stifled accents.

"James Arnett, are you crazy? Do let go of me, and behave like a sensible creature!"

The arms unclasped with electric speed.

"Aunt Miriam! how on earth—"

"Hush! don't speak above your breath! There now—if you're, going to laugh like that, you'll raise the town!"

"I—I can't help it, Aunt Miriam," gasped James, clinging to the gate post, and vainly trying to check the gusts of laughter that *would* come. "What will Uncle Peter say? who would have expected to find Mrs. Fenner, Vice-President of the Dorcas Society—"

"James, hold your tongue, if you don't want me to box your ears. And if you breathe a word of this to any living soul—"

"Well, I won't, aunty,—I won't upon my word—only the whole affair is so supremely ridiculous."

"Nonsense," said Aunt Miriam, slipping through the gate. "There, you needn't turn back with me, you silly boy. Go in and see Milly—I know that's what you would prefer. And Jamie—"

"Well, Aunt Miriam."

"I've changed my mind about that little Milly of yours. I don't believe you can find a prettier wife, or a better, so settle matters as soon as you please, and we'll see whether your old aunt Miriam has forgotten how to make wedding cake."

"But are you in earnest, aunt?"

"Never was more so in my life."

"What has altered your convictions? surely I may ask that one question?"

"That isn't at all to the purpose, young man. But remember, not a word of this ridiculous adventure!"

"You know how to administer bribes, Aunt Miriam," said the youth gayly, as he enfolded the old lady in his arms, and gave her yet a third kiss.

Through the starless darkness she hurried—under the wind tossed apple trees, and beneath the friendly shadow of her own porch, where Uncle Peter's snores yet resounded like muffled trumpets.

"What makes you so late, wife?" demanded a drowsy voice from the inner apartment, as she glided around, replacing shawls and wrappers. "I've been as fast asleep as a dormouse, I do believe—but I did think I heerd the click of the bolt."

"It must have been the kitten among the tin pans," quoth Aunt Miriam—the nearest approach to a fib she ever indulged in, before or after.

And in subsequent life, when the firm conviction seized her, that James Arnett had imparted her secret—in strict confidence, of course—to his pretty wife, she consoled herself by saying, mentally:

"Well, I don't care if he has—for my part, I shall always be glad of that peep into Squire Brownell's window."

Fitted to a Hair.

Sometime ago, being in company with a medical man whom I call Mr. ——, we fell into conversation on the uses of the microscope, in the management of which he was an adept.

'Now,' said he, 'I will tell you a story of what happened to myself—one which, I think, well illustrates the importance of this instrument to society, though I was put in a very unpleasant position owing to my acquaintance with it.

'I have, as you know, given a good deal of attention to comparative anatomy, especially to the structure of the hair, as it appears under the microscope. To the unassisted eye, indeed, all hair appears very much alike except as it is long or short, dark or fair, straight or curly, coarse or fine. Under the microscope, however, the case is very different; the white man's is round, the negro's oval; the mouse's apparently jointed; the bat's jagged; and so on.—Indeed, every animal has hair of a peculiar character, and what is more, this character varies according to the part of the body from which it is taken—an important circumstance, as it will appear from my story, which is this:

'I once received a letter by post, containing a few hairs, with a request that I would examine them, and adding, that they would be called for in a few days. Accordingly I submitted the hairs to a microscope, when I discovered that they were from the human eyebrow, and had been bruised. I made a note to the effect, and folded it up with the hairs in an envelope, ready for the person who sent them. In a few days a stranger called and inquired whether I had made the investigation.

'Oh, yes,' I said, 'there they are, and you will find them and their description in this envelope,' handing it to him at the same time. He expressed himself as being much obliged, and offered me a fee, which, however, I declined, telling him that I could not think of taking anything for so small a matter.

'It turned out, however, of more consequence than I had imagined; for within a week I was served with a subpœna, to attend as a witness on a *trial for murder*. This was very disagreeable, as I have said; but there was no help for it now. The case was this: A man was killed by a blow with some blunt instrument on the eyebrow, and the hairs sent me for examination had been taken from a hammer in the possession of the supposed murderer. I was put into the witness box, and my testimony 'that the hairs were from the human eyebrow, and had been bruised,' was just the link in the chain of evidence which sufficed to convict the prisoner. The jury, however, were not easily satisfied that my statement was worth anything; and it required the solemn assurance of the Judge that such a conclusion was in the reach of science, to convince them that they might act upon it.

'One juryman in particular—an old farmer — was very hard to satisfy. 'Does thee mean to say,' said he, 'that thee can tell any hair of any animal?' I answered that I would not take upon myself to assert positively that I could do that, although I believed I could.—'Well,' said he, 'I'll prove thee.'

'The prisoner, as I said, was convicted, and I went home, and in the busy life of an extensive practice forgot all about my obstinate old farmer. About two years afterwards, a person, an utter stranger to me, called on me with a few hairs screwed up in a piece of paper, which he asked me to examine and report on.

'Is this another murder case?' I inquired; 'for if so I will have nothing to do with it. For I've had enough of that kind of work.'

'No, no,' said he, 'it is nothing of the kind. It is only a matter of curiosity, which I should be very much obliged to you if you would solve; and if you would do it, I will call or send for the result of your examination in a few days' time.' Having received this assurance, I undertook the investigation.

'When he had gone out, and I had leisure, I put them under the microscope, and soon discovered that they were from the back of a Norway rat. Two or three days afterwards, as I was sitting in my consulting room, a farmer looking man was ushered in. Well, has thee looked at them hairs?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'and I find they are from the back of a Norway rat.'—'Well,' exclaimed he, 'so they are.—Thou hast forgotten me; but I have not forgotten thee. Does thee reccollect the trial for murder at the L—— assizes? I said I would prove thee; and so I have, for them hairs come from the back of a rat's skin my son sent me from Norway.' So the old gentleman was quite satisfied with the proof to which he had put me, and I, as you may well suppose, was well pleased that my skill and sagacity had stood such a queer proof as this, and more convinced than ever of the value of the microscope.'

Here the doctor ended his story, which I have given as nearly as possible in his own words, and upon which I believed a thorough dependence could be placed.—*Exchange*.

"Sir," said the young divine to X, "is there nothing that could tempt you to read a religious daily?" "Nothing in The World, sir!" replied X.

We saw a man out in the rain yesterday, without his umbrella. He said the only one he had was new, and he wasn't a going to soil it by getting it wet! A prudent man!

Miscellaneous.

'Selling' A Fellow.

BY ARITHMETICAL PROGRESSION.

Last summer, while engaged in the tobacco and cigar business, I used to have for a customer in cheap cigars one of those knowing fellows whose knowledge serves better to bore his victims than to advance science. You couldn't make him believe that—oh, no! Tell him there were regalia cigars that cost $40 per thousand!—it might do to stuff down the throats of those who knew no better; he was none of them. And so it was with everything; he always knew best. It always appeared to be his delight to draw me into some controversy, no matter what the subject, in order to hear himself hold forth. I tried every way I could think of to circumvent him, and at length I succeeded in laying him out as flat as a flounder.

It was on Saturday afternoon, he came in and made a purchase, and seated himself to deal me out his usual portion; but I was wide awake for him.

'Captain,' said I, 'I've made up my mind to go to California, and if you wish to go into a speculation, now is your time.'

'As how?' said he.

'Why you see those fifteen boxes of cigars? Well there are two hundred and fifty in each box, and I will let you have the whole fifteen at a low rate providing you take them all.

'Very well,' said my friend, 'let's hear the conditions.'

'You give me one cent for the first box, two cents for the second, four for the third, and so on doubling up on every box.'

'Done!' said he; 'fetch on your cigars. S'pose you think I haven't money enough, eh?'

'Not at all, so let's proceed; here's first box.'

He drew from his pocket a leathern purse, and out of it a handful of money.

'And here's the cent,' said he depositing a green discolored copper on the counter.

'Here's your second box.'

'And here's your two cents.'

'Very well; here's your third box.'

'And here's your four cents,' said he, chuckling.

'Here's your fourth box.'

'Exactly. And here's your eight cents! Ha! ha! ha! old fellow—go on!'

'Here's your fifth box,' said I handing down another.

'And here's your sixteen cents.'

'Here's your sixth box.'

'And—ha! ha! ha! ha!—here's your thirty-two cents.'

'Here's your seventh box.'

'And here—ha! by Jove the joke is getting too rich—here's your sixty-four cents, and nearly half your cigars are gone.'

'Here's your eighth box,' said I, assuming a cool indifference, that perfectly astonished the fellow:

'And here's your dollar and twenty-eight cents.'

'Here's your ninth box.'

'And here's your—let me see—ah! two dollars and fifty-six cents.'

'Here's your tenth box.'

Here he drew his wallet thoughtfully and on the slate made a small calculation.

'And here's your five dollars and twelve cents.'

'Here's your eleventh box.'

'And here's your—twice five is ten, twice twelve is twenty-four—ten dollars and twenty-four cents.'

At this stage of the game he had got quite docile; I continued—

'Here's your twelfth box; hand over the twenty dollars and forty-eight cents.'

Here the globules of perspiration big as marrowfat peas, stood out in bold relief on his face, but at length he doled out the sum.

'Here's your thirteenth box—fork over your forty dollars and ninety-six cents.

At this crisis he looked perfectly wild. The sweat was pouring off of him in streams; and the tobacco juice running out of his mouth.'

'F-o-r t-y n-i-n-e-t-y s-i x. If I do I do, but if I do may I be ——!'

And raking his pile into his hat, he crushed it on his head, and made his exit at a rate of speed altogether unheard of; and I have never seen him near enough to speak to him from that day to this.

Living for Something.—Thousands of men breathe, move and live—pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? They do not a particle of good in the world, and none were blessed by them, none could point to them as the instrument of their redemption; not a word they spoke could be recalled, and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insect of yesterday. Will you thus live and die, oh, man immortal? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness and love and mercy, on the hearts of thousand, you come in contact with, year by year; you will never be forgotten. No; your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind, as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of Heaven.—[Dr. Chalmers.

Cheap Soap.

Soap for family use can be made very cheap and of excellent quality with little trouble, by the use of a common article sold in all drug stores. This lye is put up in a concentrated form in small iron boxes holding one pound.—The boxes cost 25 cents in ordinary times, now we believe they retail at 40 or 50 cents, and will make twenty-five pounds of green or new soap. The plan of proceeding is merely to take a box of this subtance, knock of the lid, and throw it into a gallon of boiling water. After standing ten hours the lye will be clear, and must be thrown into a wash boiler with another gallon of boiling water; when the contents of the vessel boil, four pounds of any grease must be added slowly, poured in it in a thin stream and stirred well. When intimately mixed, the boiler should simmer slowly for four to six hours, and half an hour before taking off, another gallon of hot water may be added together with half a teacupful of salt.—The latter is not necessary, however, and if too much is thrown in the soap is crumbled or made short so that it breaks and wastes. When the soap is thought to be done, plunge a case knife in, if the mass drops clear and ropy and chills quickly, it is soap, and will be firm and hard when cold. Have ready a wash tub, well wet on the bottom and sides; pour the soap in and let it set; in a few hours it will be hard enough to cut out and as white as snow. This process makes 25 pounds of soap, or by the aid of grease, 4 pounds, lye 1 pound, 24 pounds of water, less two quarts driven off by boiling (one gallon weighs eight pounds nearly) are converted into soap of excellent deterative properties. Since the grease is saved from the family waste, the soap has cost only what the lye came to, and as the loss by trying is only twenty five per cent., eighteen pounds of soap can be made for fifty-five cents or a little over three cents a pound. We have made hundreds of pounds of this soap in all varieties, and use it constantly for domestic purposes. —*Scientific American*.

One pound of Babbitt's concentrated potash is better than lye for soap.

The Needle and its Work.—In the romance of 'Monte Bene' we find one of the best descriptions of this feminine accomplishment, needlwork, that has ever been penned. We will give our readers the pleasure of its perusal, as many of them, probably, have never read Mr. Hawthorne's work. He says:

There is something extremely pleasant and even touching—at least, of very sweet, soft, and winning effect—in this peculiarity of needle work, distinguishing women from men. Our own sex is incapable of any by-play, aside from the main business of life; but women—be they of what earthly rank they may—however gifted with interior genius, or endowed with awful beauty—have always some little handiwork ready to fill the tiny gap of every vacant moment. A needle is familiar to the fingers of them all. A queen, no doubt, plies it on occasion; the woman-poet can use it as adroitly as her pen; the Woman's eye that has discovered a new star turns from its glory to send the polished little instrument gleaming along the hem of her kerchief, or to darn a casual fray in her dress. And they have greatly the advantage of us in this respect. The slender thread of silk or cotton keeps them united with the small, familiar, gentle interests of life, the continually operating influences of which do so much for the health of the character, and carry off what would otherwise be a dangerous accumulation of mobid sensibility. A vast deal of human sympathy runs along this electric line, stretching from the throne to the wicker-chair of the humane seamstress, and keeping high and low in a species of communion with their kindred. Methinks it is a token of healthy and gentle characteristics, when women of high thoughts and accomplishments love to sew, especially as they are never more at home with their own hearts than while so occupied."

Boys out at Night.—The practice of allowing boys to spend their evenings on the streets is one of the most ruinous, dangerous and mischieveous things possible. Nothing so speedily and surely makes their course downward. They acquire under the cover of the night, an unhealthy state of mind, vulgar and profane language, and obscene practices. Indeed, it is in the streets after night fall that they generally acquire the education of the bad, and the capacity for becoming rowdy, dissolute, criminal men. Parents do you believe it! Will you keep your children at home at nights, and see that their home is made pleasant and profitable?

It is seldom that more truth is compressed into so small a space. The thousand of boys belonging to worthy, respectable families, who are permitted night after night to select their own company and places of resort, are on a certain road to ruin. Confiding parents, who believe that THEIR sons are safe—that they will not associate with the vicious—will one of these days have their hearts crushed, as thousands have before, by learning that sons whom they regarded as proof against an evil, have from very early years been on the road to ruin.—*Reading Times*.

A Fatal Mistake.

A young gentleman of faultless breeding was deeply enamored of a young lady who also belonged to one of the first families. Young gentleman was also a devotee of the soothing, inspiring and seductive weed, which he "took" through the medium of a choice meerschaum. On a certain occasion he was seated by the side of his Dulciena, and even went so far as to dally with her fair fingers, while at the same time inhaling at intervals the fragrance of his amber tipped consoler. Every smoker knows that the contents of a pipe need occasional tampering or ramming down. Young gentleman found his pipe in the act of going out, and having his lady's finger at that moment in his clasp, in a fit of abstraction thrust it into the bowl among the smoldering ashes!

Young lady gave him his walking paper.

Bodily Carriage.

Instead of giving all sorts of rules about turning out the toes, and straightening up the body, and holding the shoulders back, all of which are impracticable to many, because soon forgotten, or of a feeling of awkwardness and discomfort which procures a willing omission; all that is necessary to secure the object is to hold up the head and move on, letting the toes and shoulders take care of themselves. Walk with the chin but slightly above a horizontal line, or with your eye directed to things a little higher than your own head. In this way you walk properly, pleasurably, and without any feeling of restraint or awkwardness. If any one wishes to be aided in securing this habitual carriage of body, accustom yourself to carry your hands behind you, one hand grasping the opposite wrist. Englishmen are admired the world over for their full chests, and broad shoulders, and sturdy frames, and manly bearing. This position of body is a favorite with them, in the simple promenade in the garden or gallery, in attending ladies along a crowded street, or in public worship. Many persons spend a large part of their waking existence in the sitting position. A single rule, well attended to in this connection, would be of incalculable value to multitudes—use chairs with the old-fashioned straight backs, a little inclining backwards, and sit with the lower portion of the body close against the back of the chair at the seat; any one who tries it will observe in a moment a grateful support to the whole spine. And we see no reason why children should not be taught from the beginning to write, and sew, and knit, in a position requiring the lower portion of the body and the shoulders to touch the back of the chair all the time. A very common position in sitting, especially among men, is with the shoulders against the chair back with a space of several inches between the chair back and the lower portion of the spine, giving the body the shape of a half hoop; it is the instaneous, instinctive, and almost universal position assumed by any consumptive on sitting down, unless counteracted by an effort of the will; hence parents should regard such a position in their children with apprehension, and should rectify it at once.—*Hall's Journal of Health*.

Time.

Ninety years hence, probably not a man or woman now twenty years old will be alive. Ninety years! Alas! how many of the lively actors at present on the stage of life will make the exit long ere ninety years shall have rolled away! And could we be sure of ninety years, what are they? "A tale that is told; a dream, an empty sound, that passeth on the winds away, and is forgotten." Years shorten as man advances in age; like the degrees in longitude, man's life declines as he travels towards the frozen pole until he dwindles to a point, and vanishes forever. Is it possible that life is of short duration? Will ninety years erase all the golden names over the doors in town and country, and substitute others in their stead? Will all the now blooming beauty fade and disappear, and love, hope, and joy pass away in ninety years, and be forgotten? "Nine—years," said death, "do you think I shall wait ninety years? Behold to-day, and to-morrow, and every day is mine. When ninety years are past, this generation shall have mingled in the dust and be remembered not."

A woman may be in
courts and courtiers, b
ship.

One who is half m
bow to the rich and
poor.